

The Inland Northern speech of the very early 20th century was the basis for the term "General American", though a new regional accent has since developed in that area.^{[7][8]}

Notes

Northern American English	
	Northern U.S. English
Region	Northern United States
Language family	Indo-European <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germanic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Germanic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Sea Germanic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anglo-Frisian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anglic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North American English <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American English <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern American English
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	–
 <p>21st-century research unites the whole grey-brown region of this map as a Northern U.S. super-dialect region. Notice that the Northwest and much of New England are not included.</p>	



Phonology

In the modern day, the Northern United States is a linguistic super-region of English dialects, defined by /oʊ/ (as in *goat*, *toe*, *show*, etc.) and traditionally /u/ (as in *goose*, *too*, *shoe*, etc.) pronounced conservatively far in the back of the mouth, "r-fulness" (or rhoticity), and a common lack of the cot-caught merger, meaning that words like *pond* and *pawned*, or *bot* and *bought*, are not pronounced identically (with the second of this class of words being pronounced usually farther back in the mouth and with more rounded lips).



The Northern Cities Vowel Shift is a series of sound changes in the North that covers a large area from western New England and New York to regions west of Wisconsin.^[9]

A phenomenon known as "Canadian raising"—the lifting of the body of the tongue in both /aɪ/ and /aʊ/ before voiceless consonants (therefore, in words, like *height*, *slight*, *advice*, *clout*, *ouch*, *lout*, etc., but not in words like *hide*, *slide*, *advise*, *cloud*, *gouge*, *loud*, etc.)—is common in eastern New England, for example in Boston (and the traditional accent of Martha's Vineyard), as well as in the Upper Midwest. Raising of just /aɪ/ is found throughout the entire North, including in the Great Lakes area,^[10] and elsewhere in New England.^[11] This second, more focused type of raising also appears to spreading beyond the North, as well as to California English, Philadelphia English, and Western American English dialects overall.^[12]

Though the following pronunciation variants are not all the most common ones in the North, they are still documented as variants used more strongly in this region than anywhere else in the country:^[13]

- *been* as /bɛn/ (a homophone with the name *Ben*)
- *crayon* as the single-syllable /kræɪn/ (often [kʰɪɛɪn])
- *pajamas* as /pə 'dʒæməz/ (in addition to /pə 'dʒɑməz/ more widely common nationwide)
- *handkerchief* rhyming with *beef*
- *poem* as the single-syllable /poʊm/, rhyming with *dome*
- *root* and *roof* using the FOOT vowel [ʊ] ( listen) as a somewhat common alternative to the typical GOOSE vowel [u] ( listen)^[14]

Declining characteristics

The North has historically been one of the last U.S. regions to maintain the distinction between /ɔr/ and /oʊr/, in which words like *horse* and *hoarse* or *war* and *wore*, for example, are not homophones;^[15] however, the merger of the two has quickly spread throughout the North. The KIT vowel [ɪ] ( listen) was once a common Northern U.S. sound in the word *creek*, but this has largely given way to the FLEECE vowel [i] ( listen), as in the rest of the country.^[16]

Vocabulary

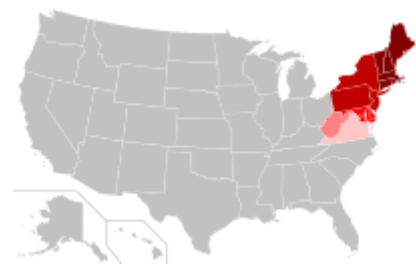
The North is reported as uniquely or most strongly using certain words:^[13]

- *babushka* (a woman's headscarf, tied under the chin)^[17]
- *bare-naked* (synonym for *naked*)^[18]

- *crayfish* (a freshwater lobster-like crustacean)
- *crust* (the end of a bread loaf)
- *diagonal* or *kitty-corner* (situated slanted across a street or intersection)
- *doing cookies* (rare synonym, scattered throughout the North, for *doing doughnuts*)
- *frosting* (synonym for *icing*)
- *futz* or *futz around* (*/fʌts/*; to fool around or waste time)^[19]
- *garbage* (synonym for *trash*)^[20]
- *on the fritz* (out of order, or into a state of disrepair)^[21]
- *pit* (the seed or stone of a fruit)^[22]
- *you guys* (the usual plural form of *you*)

Northeastern American English

A Northeastern Corridor of the United States follows the Atlantic coast, comprising all of New England, Greater New York City, and Greater Philadelphia (including adjacent areas of New Jersey), sometimes even classified as extending to Greater Baltimore and Washington D.C. This region, despite being home to numerous different dialects and accents, constitutes a huge area unified in certain linguistic respects, including particular notable vocabulary and phonemic incidence (that is, basic units of sound that can distinguish certain words).



Northeastern American English occurs in the red areas, particularly along the Atlantic coast.

Phonology

These phonemic variants in certain words are particularly correlated with the American Northeast (with the more common variants nationwide given in parentheses):^[13]

- *aunt* as */ɑnt/* (in addition to */ænt/*)
- *cauliflower* with the "i" pronounced with the FLEECE vowel */i/* (in addition to the KIT vowel */ɪ/*)
- *centaur* rhyming with *four* (in addition to the variant rhyming with *far*)
- *miracle* as */ 'mɛrəkəl/* or */ 'mɪrəkəl/* (in addition to */ 'mɪrəkəl/*)
- *route* rhyming with *shoot* (in addition to *shout*)
- *syrup* as */ 'sɪrəp/* or */ 'sɪrəp/* (in addition to */ 'sɜrəp/*)

The Northeast tends to retain a rounded */ɔ/* vowel (in words like *all*, *caught*, *flaw*, *loss*, *thought*, etc.): specifically, this is realized as *[ɔ̃ɔə]*.

Vocabulary

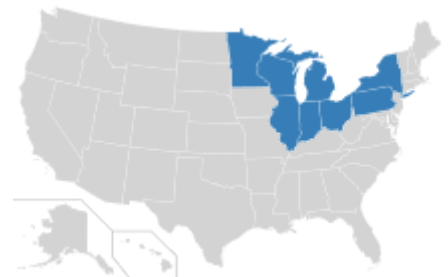
Terms common or even usual to the whole Northeast include:^[13]

- *brook* (synonym for *stream*)^[23]
- *cellar* (synonym for *basement*)
- *cruller* (a stick-like doughnut)
- *goose pimples* (synonym for *goose bumps*),

- *elastic*, *hair elastic*, or *hair thing* (synonyms for *hair tie*)
- *papering* or *TP'ing* (synonym for *toilet papering*)
- *rotary* (synonym for *traffic circle*)
- *sneakers* (any athletic shoes)
- *soda* (any sweet, carbonated *soft drink*)
- *stoop* (small outdoor staircase to a building's front door)
- *sunshower* (a sunny rainshower)
- *tractor trailer* (a semi-trailer truck)

Inland Northern American English

The recent *Northern cities vowel shift*, beginning only in the twentieth century, now affects much of the North away from the Atlantic coast, occurring specifically at its geographic center: the Great Lakes region. It is therefore a defining feature of the *Inland North* dialect (most notably spoken in Chicago, Detroit, and western New York State). The vowel shift's generating conditions are also present in some *Western New England English*,^[24] otherwise, however, this vowel shift is not occurring in the Northeastern United States.



Inland North American English appears in all these states, mostly in the areas along the Great Lakes.

See also

- *New England English*
- *Upper Midwestern English*

Notes

1. It is arguable whether or not the Pacific Northwest dialect region falls under the Northern super-dialect region. In American linguistics, "North" typically only refers to the "traditional North": the *Northeastern* and *North Central States*, while excluding the Northwestern States.

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